



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on Turkmenistan

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Douglas A. Davidson
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
January 30, 2003

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States is disappointed that the Government of Turkmenistan has apparently decided not to appoint its own rapporteur to participate in the Moscow Mechanism fact-finding mission.

The goal of the Moscow Mechanism is dialogue and clarification. It was invoked because of our concerns about procedure and due process.

We are all deeply concerned by the many credible reports of abuses in the conduct of the investigation into the November 25 events, including torture of suspects and sweeping arrests of their family members. Only an independent fact-finding mission will clarify what has been going on.

Turkmenistan is at a crossroads. Its decision on whether to cooperate with the Moscow Mechanism will either bring it closer to the international community or will heighten the walls that surround it.

The Moscow Mechanism offers a bridge to Turkmenistan; no state will win or lose more than Turkmenistan itself over its decision whether or not to cooperate. We therefore urge the Turkmen authorities to move swiftly to signal their willingness to participate fully with the Moscow Mechanism, in accordance with Turkmenistan's OSCE commitments.

Thank you.